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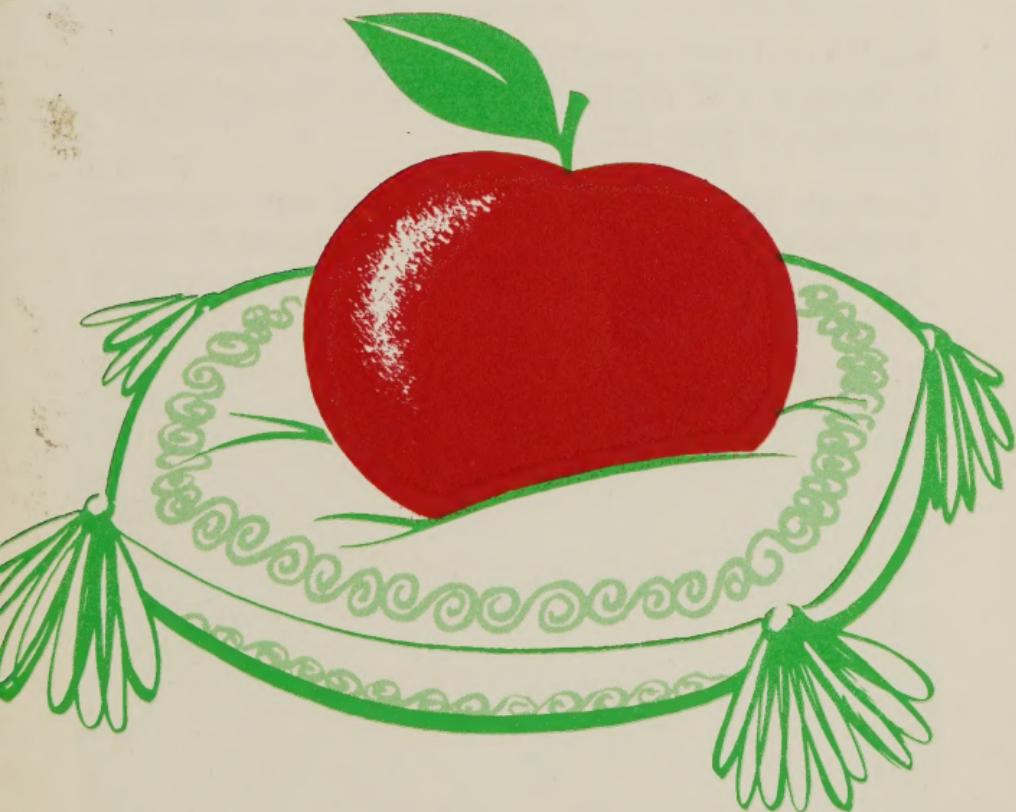
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# handling apples and pears

**FROM GROWER TO RETAILER**



**CANADA DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE**



# important

Apples and pears are among the most popular fruits in Canada and represent an annual income to the producer of over \$30 million.

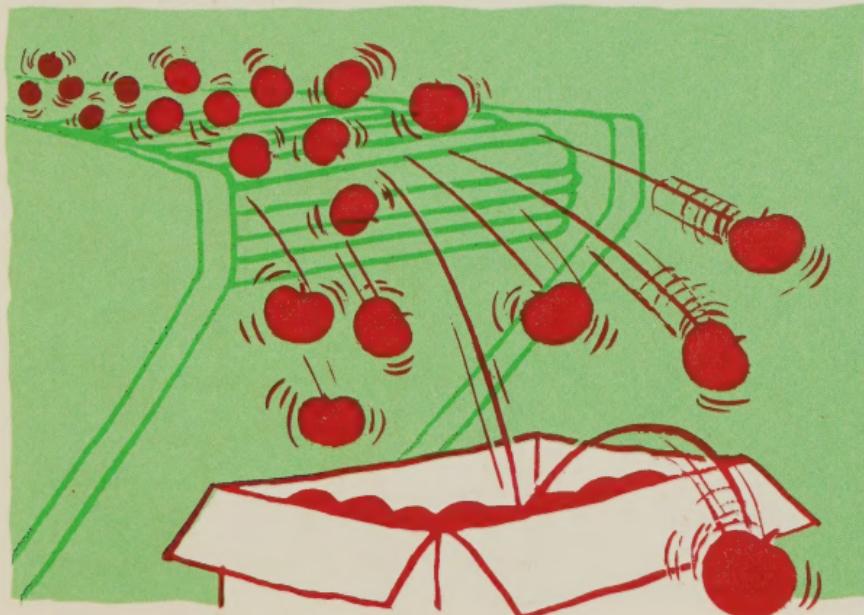
Careless handling between the tree and the retail counter causes more dissatisfied customers than any other one factor. Even a drop of only 1 to 2 inches may injure apples and pears enough to lower the quality. Always handle them gently and remember:

*"If you bruise 'em  
She won't use 'em."*

# grading, packing and shipping

Mrs. Consumer may be many many miles away and may not purchase your fruit for weeks or even months. How you grade, pack and ship your crop can have a very definite bearing on how well she is satisfied and how readily she will buy your fruit again. Take nothing for granted.

- Thoroughly check all equipment before packing season begins.
- See that all grading equipment and conveyors are well padded in areas where bruising could occur.
- Keep all equipment clean to avoid spread of disease.
- Make sure that lighting is adequate, particularly in grading areas.
- Check sizing, particularly in Cell-Pak or Tray-Pak.
- Tie poly bags snugly to prevent undue movement and bruising.
- Place poly bags on their sides in master containers to reduce bruising.
- Have all markings legible and neatly applied.
- Supervise entire grading and packing operation constantly and carefully.
- Load fruit only into clean vehicles.
- Preheat or precool vehicles when temperatures are extreme.
- Load vehicles properly with adequate bracing.
- Don't run grader too fast as this bruises the fruit.
- Don't pack borderline fruit: "When in doubt, throw it out."
- Don't drop packages; put them down carefully.
- Don't load broken or damaged packages; return them for repacking.



# harvesting

All the time, money and hard work it takes to produce a crop of apples or pears can be wasted by careless harvesting. No modern technology can rectify this damage.

- Pick at optimum maturity to ensure fruit is of prime quality at time of shipment.
- Take time to train and supervise pickers. This will minimize damage to trees and bruising of fruit.
- Leave windfalls on the ground; don't store them.
- Place fruit carefully in well-padded picking containers.
- Exercise care in moving fruit from orchard to storage to avoid bruising.
- Have fruit in cold storage within 24 hours after picking.
- Don't use stop-drop sprays to delay harvesting beyond normal picking date.
- Don't pick or handle fruit that is chilled or frozen, as it bruises readily.
- Don't carelessly dump apples into orchard containers.
- Don't overfill orchard containers.
- Don't leave picked apples sitting in the sun.
- Don't store culls.



# storing

The life of fruit depends largely on proper storage. Poor storage facilities or management can ruin an otherwise fine crop. Whatever your facilities, be sure to use them to the best advantage.

- Store fruit promptly—the sooner, the better. This cannot be overemphasized.
- Reduce storage temperature to proper level *before* fruit is received.
- Stack fruit carefully to ensure good air circulation.
- Segregate and identify weak fruit.
- Maintain temperature as close as possible to 30° or 31°F and humidity at 85-90%.
- Check temperature regularly. At 30°F apples have 20-25% and pears 35-40% longer life than at 32°. McIntosh will soften 20 times more rapidly at 70° than at 31°.
- Don't allow cold storage room doors to remain open needlessly.
- Don't assume that once the rooms are full the storage will look after itself.

## For Controlled Atmosphere Storage

- Store only well-colored, medium-sized fruit of high quality harvested at the midpoint of good commercial maturity.
- Fill storage rooms and seal within 7-10 days.
- Check atmosphere (temperature, humidity and composition) in CA storage rooms daily.



# wholesaling

Apples and pears are only two of a very wide variety of fruits and vegetables that you sell and yet they are one of your best drawing cards if you handle them to the best of your ability. Take a personal interest in the merchandising of these perishable commodities.

- Insist on careful handling by all employees at all times.
- Maintain wholesale storage at 31°-32°F if fruit is being held for more than 2 or 3 days.
- Keep your warehouse clean.
- Know your supplier and his reputation.
- Check the grade and condition of fruit as it is received.
- Segregate your stock by variety, grade, size, etc., to eliminate unnecessary handling.
- Stack fruit carefully to allow adequate ventilation but don't pile packages too high.
- If you repack, know your grades and use proper equipment.
- Check weights of consumer containers frequently.
- Rotate stock, replacing damaged containers and off-condition fruit.
- Provide adequate protection when making deliveries in extreme weather conditions.
- Don't store cartons in the same room as wet produce, as moisture will spoil the appearance of the packages.
- Don't overload either yourself or your customers.



# retailing

If the rest of the team have done their part it is now up to you to win the game by "scoring" with Mrs. Consumer. Make sure that the fruit you sell her is the best possible, so that she can enjoy

*"Happy Eating and Many Happy Returns."*

- Always check supplies when they are received.
- Store fruit in cool storage, as close to 33°F as possible.
- Know your supplier.
- Handle fruit properly; you will sell more and buy less.
- Make sure you and your produce manager know the grades you are handling.
- Keep fruit displays up to grade by checking frequently and removing all decayed or badly bruised fruit.
- Repack or replace damaged packages.
- Rotate your stock.
- Know the principal varieties and their uses so that you can help your customers select the ones best suited to their needs.
- Don't overload bulk bins.
- Don't allow rough or careless handling at any stage from the time fruit comes in through the receiving door until it is placed in the consumer's car.
- Don't overbuy.





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INFORMATION DIVISION

CANADA DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE  
OTTAWA

ROGER DUHAMEL, F.R.S.C.  
QUEEN'S PRINTER AND CONTROLLER OF STATIONERY,  
OTTAWA, 1967

Cat. No.: A81-467  
50M-33810-6.67